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New York

President:	Mr. Mayoral	(Argentina)
Members:	China	Ms. Song Danhui
	Congo	Mr. Okio
	Denmark	Mr. Faaborg-Andersen
	France	Mr. de Rivière
	Ghana	Mr. Christian
	Greece	Mr. Andreades
	Japan	Mr. Yamamoto
	Peru	Mr. Perez Alván
	Qatar	Mr. Al-Nasser
	Russian Federation	Mr. Sitnikov
	Slovakia	Mr. Galbavý
	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	Ms. Purdy
	United Republic of Tanzania	Mr. Salaita
	United States of America	Mr. Donnovan

Agenda

Small arms

Report of the Secretary-General on small arms (S/2006/109)

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06-27710 (E)

The meeting resumed at 3.05 p.m.

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): I now give the floor to the representative of Guatemala.

Mr. Skinner-Klée (Guatemala) (*spoke in Spanish*): Permit me to congratulate you, Sir, on your assumption of the presidency of the Security Council for this month. I thank you for convening this open debate and for issuing the aide-memoire, which puts the issue in perspective for the debate.

We also thank the Secretary-General for his precise report on the matter. For Guatemala, the increasing attention being accorded the issue of small arms is both timely and appropriate.

I wish also to associate myself with the statement made by the representative of Guyana on behalf of the Rio Group.

This debate, which is not the first that the Council has held on this issue, is particularly important because it is taking place on the eve of the Conference to Review Progress Made in the Implementation of the Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects. While the Programme of Action is the result of an initiative by the General Assembly, the Security Council's contribution to its implementation is essential, given that the Council is the organ responsible for the maintenance of international peace and security. It is from that standpoint that we view the role of the Security Council in this area.

In 1999 the Council recognized that the destabilizing accumulation of small arms contributes to the intensity and duration of armed conflicts and that it can be a contributing factor to undermining peace agreements, complicating peacebuilding efforts and increasing the vulnerability of civilians, due to the indiscriminate use of such arms. Likewise, the Security Council expressed particular concern about the humanitarian, social and economic repercussions of the excessive stockpiling and transfer of small arms.

It is with these concerns in mind that I will confine myself to some specific comments on certain aspects of the recent report of the Secretary-General, which is of particular importance in this debate.

While Guatemala supports the implementation of the first recommendation made by the Secretary-General, we continue to believe that the character and the ambitious scope of the recently adopted International Instrument to Enable States to Identify and Trace, in a Timely and Reliable Manner, Illicit Small Arms and Light Weapons does not meet the needs of the most affected countries. We had hoped that that Instrument would complement the commitments we have undertaken under the Inter-American Convention against the Illicit Manufacturing of and Trafficking in Firearms, Ammunition, Explosives and Other Related Materials.

However, we believe that that goal is one that we will achieve later on and that at this time we must strive to achieve better results on the Programme of Action's other provisions of an international nature that have yet to be addressed. For example, there will be an opportunity with respect to the process involving the illicit brokering of small arms and light weapons, as noted in the Secretary-General's fourth recommendation.

The spirit of recommendations 5, 10 and 11 relates to one of the Security Council's main areas of responsibility in this area: the creation of appropriate mechanisms to monitor the effective implementation of sanctions, especially arms embargoes. An overall approach will require not only the resolute and timely application of arms embargoes by the Council but also the Council's strict monitoring of their rigorous application.

In that connection, we would like also to commend the efforts of the sanctions Committees and of their monitoring mechanisms to ensure compliance with the measures provided for to combat the illicit trade in small arms. Moreover, it must be noted that their work will become increasingly beneficial as Member States gradually include in their respective legislations measures aimed at preventing violations of embargoes imposed by the Council.

The proliferation of small arms and light weapons contributes not only to the creation of conflicts but also to their recurrence — hence the importance of disarmament, demobilization and reintegration (DDR) programmes as essential elements in conflict prevention and in post-conflict peacebuilding. Thus it is essential, as noted by the Secretary-General in his recommendation 7, that the Council include relevant DDR provisions in the mandates of peacekeeping operations, including the destruction of excessive stockpiles, so that they clearly address the issue of arms control.

In that connection, it is heartening to see that that is already being implemented, and we welcome the fact that, in its presidential statement issued under the symbol S/PRST/2005/7, the Council stressed

> "the importance of a comprehensive international and regional approach to DDR that is not limited to the political and security aspects of disarmament, demobilization and reintegration of former combatants, but addresses also its social and economic aspects, including special needs of child soldiers and women".

Lastly, my delegation believes that the efforts of the international community to address the problem of small arms as well as the impetus given to this issue in the General Assembly will be strengthened by today's Security Council debate. That, we believe, will provide additional political impetus to the implementation of the 2001 Programme of Action and ensure that the United Nations continues to play a key role in combating the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons in all its aspects.

Guatemala will shortly be hosting the regional Latin American and Caribbean meeting to be held from 5 to 9 May in the city of Antigua Guatemala. We hope that that meeting will represent a contribution on the part of the Group of Latin American and Caribbean States to the forthcoming Review Conference on the illicit trade in small arms.

Solving the problem of small arms and light weapons will no doubt require a comprehensive effort on more than one front. There are no easy ways of tackling this issue, but the scope of the political commitments made to combat the problem could help to chart a new course. In that regard, the Security Council has a key role to play in focusing world attention on this scourge.

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): I should like to inform the Council that I have received a letter from the representative of Norway in which he requests to be invited to participate in the consideration of the item on the Council's agenda. In conformity with the usual practice, I propose, with the consent of the Council, to invite that representative to participate in the consideration, without the right to vote, in accordance with the relevant provisions of the Charter and rule 37 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure.

There being no objection, it is so decided.

At the invitation of the President, Mr. Løvald (Norway) took the seat reserved for him at the side of the Council Chamber.

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): The next speaker on my list is the representative of the Republic of Korea, to whom I give the floor.

Mr. Choi Young-jin (Republic of Korea): Mr. President, allow me first to convey my delegation's appreciation to you for holding today's open debate on the important issue of small arms and light weapons. I would also like to join other delegations in commending the Secretary-General for his efforts to address this issue. My delegation fully supports the recommendations contained in his report, and the Republic of Korea is committed to their implementation.

The first Review Conference of the Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects will be held in June this year. The Conference will be an important opportunity to look back on what has been achieved since the adoption of the Programme of Action in 2001 and to look closely into what remains to be done.

There have been some important accomplishments, including the adoption of the International Instrument on the marking and tracing of small arms and light weapons and the entry into force of the United Nations Firearms Protocol. Those steps, however, must be seen as a good beginning to a long journey. It is time for us to renew our commitment to fighting the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons, which brings tremendous suffering to millions of innocent civilians while undermining peace, safety, security and development throughout the world.

With this in mind, I would like to address some of the issues raised by the report of the Secretary-General.

First, my delegation believes that the Security Council should play a more active role in our concerted efforts to curb the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons. To date, the Council has shown a steady determination to deal with this issue, and we are pleased to note the Council's progress in reflecting the Secretary-General's recommendations in its deliberations and decisions. We believe that the

Security Council can make further efforts to strengthen the monitoring systems for its arms embargoes.

Another key area to be emphasized is the continuing incorporation of comprehensive disarmament, demobilization and reintegration (DDR) programmes into peacekeeping operations. We support the Secretary-General's recommendation that the Security Council explicitly articulate a DDR plan in the mandate of each peacekeeping operation. We expect that the new Peacebuilding Commission will play an important part in this endeavour.

Secondly, particular attention should be paid to illicit brokering in small arms and light weapons, which continues to undermine compliance with the Security Council's arms embargoes. As the Secretary-General rightly points out in his report, regarding recommendation 4, international efforts to control illicit brokering should be strengthened. My delegation fully supports a broader and more effective approach to prevent illicit brokering and welcomes the establishment of a group of governmental experts to review this issue. My delegation is also pleased to note that the Government of the Republic of Korea added clauses to its Defence Acquisition Program Act in January 2006 to regulate arms brokering.

Thirdly, the establishment of effective legal systems and relevant administrative measures at the State level is critical. These should include the use of authenticated end-user certificates, with a view to ensuring effective control over the production and trade of small arms and light weapons. For our part, the Republic of Korea has established and implemented legislative and administrative measures to control the military and non-military use of small arms and light weapons in every phase of their existence, from manufacturing to storage, management, transfer and dismantlement.

Fourthly, transparency is indispensable if States are to work together in a spirit of cooperation and trust in order to overcome the challenge of the proliferation of small arms and light weapons. We therefore call upon those States that have not participated in the United Nations Register of Conventional Arms and the United Nations Standardized Instrument for Reporting Military Expenditures to do so without delay. We believe that the Secretary-General's suggestion to expand the Register to include international transfers of small arms and light weapons deserves positive consideration.

Lastly, my delegation believes that progress on the issue of small arms and light weapons can be significantly enhanced through increased public awareness. Combating the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons requires the collective will not just of States and the international community, but also of individual citizens. Public understanding of what is at stake can help to create the political will necessary for success. Similarly, non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and civil society have an important role to play in dealing with this issue. My delegation therefore hopes that the review conference will give due attention to heightening public awareness and enhancing collaborative efforts with NGOs and civil society.

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): I now call on the representative of Senegal.

Mr. Badji (Senegal) (*spoke in French*): I wish to express our highly positive appreciation of the report of the Secretary-General that the Security Council is considering and to thank the Officer-in-Charge of the Department for Disarmament Affairs for her outstanding presentation of the report. I am pleased now to take the floor on behalf of my country before this Council to speak about an issue that is of particular importance to Senegal, to Africa and to a number of other regions throughout the world.

Indeed, small arms merit the sustained attention of the international community in general and the Security Council in particular, given that these weapons have disastrous consequences for our populations, our development and our security. This ongoing attention is especially necessary inasmuch as small arms are a common denominator of the armaments process for all United Nations Member States, because these weapons exist everywhere.

It was only a few weeks ago that delegations noted, for the most part with regret, the bland conclusions that were reached by the meeting of the preparatory committee — which was held here in New York from 9 to 20 January 2006 — for the review conference for the United Nations Programme of Action on the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons. We hope that the review conference, scheduled for 26 June to 7 July 2006, will allow Member States to agree on the essential actions to be undertaken at all levels specified in the Programme of Action so as to ensure correct implementation. And

speaking of implementation, my country is pleased with the invaluable contribution made by non-governmental organizations (NGOs) in this area. It is appropriate here to reiterate that a rightful place should be given to NGOs, including during deliberations of Member States.

Without going back over the different positions held by Senegal on the question of small arms, which have been widely publicized before this Council and in other United Nations bodies, I would like to highlight a few aspects that seem important to us. Senegal believes that the instrument on marking and tracing small arms must be promptly complemented by a legally binding instrument, preferably on brokering. A group of governmental experts on this matter should meet as soon as possible.

Additionally, my country is of the view that disarmament, demobilization and reintegration (DDR) programmes should receive stepped-up attention, particularly with respect to the reintegration component. In fact, the DDR programme is a whole and would not be productive if it focused only on disarmament and demobilization to the detriment of the reintegration of ex-combatants. These reintegration programmes must be inclusive, and they must be developed in collaboration with the affected communities. They must take fully into account the concerns of women and children, who are very often the first victims of light weapons.

Senegal would also like to underscore the links between the United Nations Programme of Action and the Register of Conventional Arms. It appears that the time has come for Member States to consider ways of formally including light weapons on the Register with a view to comprehensive and coherent international management of the matter. The goal of the Programme of Action is to prevent, combat and eliminate the illicit trade in small arms, while the Register — as a tool to promote transparency and trust — is concerned with the licit transfer of weapons. Efficiently combining those two mechanisms would make it possible better to control the scourge by ensuring greater transparency of and control over international transfers in light weapons, especially as concerns non-State actors.

I cannot conclude without congratulating you, Sir, on the exemplary and effective manner in which you are presiding over the work of the Council this month, as well as on your initiative to hold this debate. I wish to thank all the members of the Council for the opportunity given to my delegation to participate in this important debate on light weapons.

The President (*spoke in French*): I thank Ambassador Badji for his kind words addressed to me and for his support for me and my delegation.

(*spoke in Spanish*)

I call on the representative of Canada.

Mr. Adsett (Canada): Canada appreciates the opportunity to participate in this important debate on small arms and light weapons. We thank the Secretary-General for his report, which contains excellent recommendations on ways and means by which the Council can continue to address all aspects of the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons.

As is tragically evident, the proliferation and misuse of small arms and light weapons represents a major threat to human security throughout the world. No country, no State and no community is immune. Small arms alone are instrumental in the deaths of approximately half a million people per year — 10,000 per week. Many, possibly millions more, fall victim to their indirect consequences, creating an obstacle to sustainable development.

The United Nations Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects, which was adopted in 2001, was a major achievement. Ensuring its full implementation will remain a major challenge for many years to come. This debate affords us an opportunity to take stock of the progress made, to consider lessons learned and, most important, to renew our collective commitment to our shared goals.

(*spoke in French*)

The General Assembly's adoption of the International Instrument to Enable States to Identify and Trace, in a Timely and Reliable Manner, Illicit Small Arms and Light Weapons — which provides practical guidelines with respect to marking, record-keeping and initiating and responding to tracing requests — was among last year's most significant milestones. That instrument promises to make it easier to identify points of diversion of light weapons from legitimate use to the illicit market.

Canada urges the Council to continue to pursue increased cooperation with the International Criminal

Police Organization — Interpol — to better identify points of diversion in the trade in small arms and to continue to encourage greater international cooperation to stem the illicit flow of small arms to conflict and post-conflict zones. With respect to the latter, we support the recommendation contained in the report of the open-ended working group that the applicability of the provisions of the instrument to United Nations peacekeeping operations be considered. Canada believes that committees on peacekeeping operations and sanctions should, among other things, be mandated to initiate small arms traces to assist States to identify and pursue those who violate arms embargoes.

The Secretary-General's report highlights various means to enforce the arms embargoes currently mandated by the Security Council. Canada particularly appreciates the monitoring work carried out by the groups of experts and encourages the Council to continue to make use of such mechanisms.

(*spoke in English*)

Canada supports the Council's decision to include provisions for disarmament, demobilization and reintegration (DDR) in the mandate of United Nations peacekeeping operations, taking into consideration the special needs of men, women, boys and girls. Clearly, the full reintegration of ex-combatants is vital to ensure sustained peace and to avoid ex-soldiers being re-recruited into armed groups. Canada encourages the Security Council to include DDR in the budgets of peacekeeping operations.

In conclusion, I wish to draw attention to the seminal opportunity provided by the first review conference of the United Nations Programme of Action on small arms and light weapons, which is to be held later this year, to further address the humanitarian impact of the misuse of small arms and light weapons. Canada will work closely with other States, international and regional organizations and civil society groups dedicated to that issue to ensure that the review conference is a productive and valuable event that accelerates global action on that critically important issue.

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): I now give the floor to the representative of Indonesia.

Mr. Jenie (Indonesia): I would like to congratulate you, Sir, on your assumption of the presidency for the Council for the month of March, as well as to thank you for convening this open debate on this very important subject.

As a nation that has experienced the impact of the illicit trafficking and the smuggling of small arms, Indonesia well recognizes how dangerous they can be and how they can hurt the process of development, security and national integrity.

My delegation is pleased to note the efforts that have been made so far towards the implementation of the various recommendations contained in the report of the Secretary-General before us. It is important to emphasize that those recommendations clearly focus on areas of competence of the Security Council alone, that is, the maintenance of international peace and security. In view of the time available to delegations to contribute to this debate, I shall limit myself to making a few general observations and specific recommendations of particular interest.

We fully support every initiative to develop a mechanism to identify and trace illicit small arms and light weapons in a timely and reliable manner. In that respect, we are gratified that, last December, the General Assembly adopted an International Instrument in that regard. Despite its non-legally binding nature, we hope that Member States will be committed to fully implementing its provisions. We believe that sound cooperation among countries in the field of tracing illegal small arms will be a critical factor for success in the overall struggle to prevent, combat and eradicate the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons in all its aspects.

With regard to recommendation 4, concerning means by which the Security Council might enhance its interaction with the General Assembly in the area of long-term strategies to halt the scourge of the illicit proliferation of small arms, we believe that enhanced interaction between the General Assembly and the Security Council would contribute to developing a coherent and comprehensive United Nations policy on small arms and light weapons. While, currently, the two principal organs have addressed the issue of small arms within their respective mandates, interaction and coordination between them on that issue would encourage the complementarity of their work and would therefore be welcomed. Indeed, that would be fully in line with paragraph 70 of resolution 60/1 — the 2005 world summit outcome document — which recognizes that, in accordance with the Charter,

addressing matters of peace and collective security requires cooperation among all the principal organs of the United Nations within their respective mandates.

With regard to recommendation 5, we share the concern that was raised by a coalition of international non-governmental organizations in a report that quite a number of United Nations embargoes imposed in the last decade have been repeatedly violated. Further steps by the Council are required to remedy that.

Let me turn to recommendation 7, by which the Security Council is encouraged to call upon relevant parties to conflicts under its consideration to recognize the importance of activities related to disarmament, demobilization and reintegration (DDR) and of including such measures in negotiated agreements. The Council has continued to do that and to draw the attention of relevant parties to their obligations in that respect. We encourage the continuation of DDR programmes in conflict areas, such as the programme that was implemented by the United Nations Operation in Côte d'Ivoire.

With reference to recommendation 9 on the Council's encouraging States that lack legislative or other measures to ensure effective control over the export and transit of small arms and light weapons, my delegation has no doubt that such mechanisms could indeed contribute to more responsible and legal transfers of weapons. However, we hope that it will continue to be implemented without prejudice to the right of States to legally trade or acquire such weapons for the purpose of their defence and security.

My delegation commends the Security Council for its continued commitment to eradicating the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons within its mandated area of international peace and security. However, as we look ahead to the 2006 United Nations conference to review the implementation of the Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects, it is necessary to remind ourselves that the problem is of a broader dimension than the mandate of the Security Council. As we all know, there is a tremendous amount of work being done elsewhere, particularly in the General Assembly. The Programme of Action adopted by the General Assembly in 2001 is a powerful tool and remains the cornerstone for building norms on small arms and light weapons.

In our view, the door to success on that issue is cooperation between all relevant parties, and we encourage all the principal organs and agencies of the United Nations that have a contribution to make to do so in the spirit of the common objective. Let us be conscious of the fact that the illicit trafficking of small arms and light weapons is a major problem and may indeed be the key obstacle not only to peace, but also to development. As we have seen, it has also been the factor that opens the door from peace back to chaos and war.

In conclusion, we hope that the result of this debate may contribute to the substantive outcome of the review conference on the Programme of Action.

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): I give the floor to the representative of Cambodia.

Mr. Chem (Cambodia): First of all, allow me, on behalf of my delegation, to most warmly congratulate you, Sir, on your assumption of the presidency of the Security Council for the current month. My delegation would like to wish you success and to reaffirm to you our full support and cooperation.

I would also like to thank you for allowing me to speak on the important agenda item on small arms. Although the expression "small arms" contains the word "small", it is a cause of big concern and will require us to work in concert for a long time to bring peace and security to individual countries, as well as to the whole world. For that reason, it is timely that the issue of small arms is being taken up for open debate by the Security Council today, in which I am pleased to share some comments from the perspective of my own delegation.

My delegation would like to extend our sincere appreciation to the Secretary-General for his report on small aims, which puts forward 12 recommendations whereby he calls on States to work more on the issue of eliminating small arms. My delegation also highly appreciates the Secretary-General's observations and conclusions, on which my country stands ready to join hands on that issue.

After three decades of war, genocide and conflict, Cambodia is well placed to reiterate its unequivocal commitment to the collection and destruction of small arms and light weapons in order to cement peace, social security and political stability in the kingdom. It has developed a number of programmes, ranging from

law enforcement on arms control to the programme known as "Weapons for Development", which has led to the destruction of more than 170,000 collected and surplus weapons since 1998. My delegation wishes to take this opportunity to express its deep thanks to the European Union and Japan for their valuable assistance to the programmes.

Having met with success in small arms control and weapons collection and destruction, the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), at the fifth ASEAN Ministerial Meeting on Transnational Crime in Hanoi in November 2005, endorsed Cambodia as a lead shepherd country, that is, a country which coordinates among ASEAN members on countering arms smuggling. Cambodia, accordingly, came forward with the proposal to establish a resource centre as a coordinating body to facilitate and mobilize efforts and resources to combat the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons in South-East Asia. In that regard, we would highly appreciate and welcome support from the international community to realize the important goal of setting up the Centre, which would make an important contribution to our common struggle against transnational crime and terrorism.

On the international front, Cambodia would like to reiterate its unequivocal commitment to the full implementation of the 2001 United Nations Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects by developing national programmes for the control of small arms, such as the long-standing plan to curb the illicit small arms trade.

As one of the supporters of the resolutions on combating and preventing the proliferation of small arms that were adopted by the General Assembly in December 2005, my delegation fully supports the upcoming United Nations conference to review progress made in the implementation of the Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects, to be convened in June and July this year. Despite controversies in the debates of the preparatory committee, which led the Chairman to produce only a conference room paper that could not reflect the views expressed, my delegation has full confidence in the upcoming review conference and strongly hopes that it will help us further in the implementation of the Programme of Action. We must not let that important opportunity slip away in our common efforts to make our world more secure with fewer weapons.

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): I call on the representative of Fiji.

Mr. Savua (Fiji): My delegation congratulates you, Sir, on your assumption of the presidency for this month.

Fiji agrees that actions that could contribute to implementing the Secretary-General's recommendations on ways and means to deal with the question of the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons is primarily a national responsibility. However, it is not easy to remain constantly engaged without regional and international support through the establishment of effective partnerships, networking and information-sharing. In that regard, we gratefully acknowledge the continued valuable contributions to our region by Australia, New Zealand, Japan, the United Nations Regional Centre for Peace and Disarmament, and others too many to mention.

We would like to thank the Secretary-General and the Secretariat for the comprehensive and succinct report contained in document S/2006/109 of 17 February 2006. We note the adoption of the International Instrument to Enable States to Identify and Trace, in a Timely and Reliable Manner, Illicit Small Arms and Light Weapons. For small countries like Fiji, with small weapons stockpiles, it is encouraging to see come into existence an Instrument that will facilitate implementation of our stringent gun laws and tight control of ammunition supply and demand.

As a United Nations peacekeeping troop contributor for the past 28 years, we understand only too well the difficulties associated with trying to maintain peace in areas with porous borders and acting as easy conduits to the movement of weapons and combatants. We are very much encouraged by the recent emphasis by the Security Council on preventing the cross-border movement of arms and combatants, implementing the disarmament, demobilization and reintegration process, and monitoring arms embargoes. We look forward to participating in United Nations peacekeeping operations in areas of relative peace where these international instruments are implemented and the areas of emphasis of the Security Council diligently observed. However, in the peacekeeping areas of the Sudan, Liberia, Kosovo, Baghdad, Basra

and Erbil, this initiative by the Security Council has to be given time for hope to become truly ingrained.

These instruments will assist nations emerging from conflicts to stabilize their economies and security situations, and help them in making a significant contribution to improving the lot of women, children and the helpless, who often look at life with no hope that their situation will change, because no one appears to care. The Security Council, by its actions, leads the international community in providing such hope and to change the status quo.

The pervasive and destructive effect of the uncontrolled and illicit proliferation of small arms and light weapons on the natural resources of nations, as well as the thriving trade in conflict diamonds, stymies the development of countries, perpetuates the struggle of the poor and multiplies the ill-effects of pandemics. The implementation of adopted international conventions and the insistence that nations conform and take appropriate actions to strengthen their efforts will have the added impetus of strengthening the collective responsibility to act.

The Security Council's holistic approach to action and the various resolutions and decisions that it has adopted represent a welcome move in the right direction to ensure that something is done. Resolution 1325 (2000) on women and peace and security is one such resolution. The Special Committee on Peacekeeping Operations included in its report, adopted last Friday, a paragraph that captures the sentiments expressed in the resolution by requesting the Department of Peacekeeping Operations to develop a gender-training strategy and to ensure the input of gender expertise in the Integrated Training Service to coordinate that effort.

The Special Committee has in essence agreed to implement the first phase of the item on women and peace and security since the Security Council adopted resolution 1325 (2000) five years ago.

My delegation welcomes the strong initiatives by the Council to promote implementation on all issues that have been subject to resolutions, conventions and regional action plans. We thank the Council for all this and the Secretary-General for monitoring the activities and ensuring that they receive equal attention.

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): The next speaker is the representative of Nigeria, to whom I give the floor.

Mr. Wali (Nigeria): Mr. President, may I join others in congratulating you on your assumption of the presidency of the Council for this month. I should like also to thank you for having convened this open debate on this very important subject.

On behalf of the Nigerian delegation, I wish to convey our appreciation for the opportunity to participate in the Security Council's open debate on small arms. I thank the Secretary-General for his report contained in document S/2006/109 of 17 February 2006. As is highlighted in the Report, the major challenge before the Security Council concerns its contribution towards curbing the illicit small arms trade, which has fuelled conflicts and hampered the achievement of peace and security as well as stability and development in sections of the international community, including the African region.

As the Council is no doubt aware from the first and second Biennial Meetings of States which assessed the implementation of the Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects, there has, regrettably, been little progress on the matter since the Programme's adoption in July 2001. This is in spite of the efforts made at various levels. The fact is that the illicit circulation of small arms has continued, with their devastating effects on the States and regions concerned, calling into question the political will of the international community to take a decisive step in this area. The international community seems paralysed, and soldiers of fortune have unfettered freedom to prey on the weaknesses of crisis-prone countries, which have turned them into theatres of insecurity.

It cannot be overemphasized that there is a need to accord priority to the issue of the easy accessibility of such arms and weapons to non-State actors and to prevent such accessibility. Nigeria remains convinced that the best and most effective strategy for achieving this goal is through the conclusion of a legally binding international instrument to control the supply of small arms and light weapons to non-State actors. We agree with the prevailing view among the majority of Member States that such weapons, as, indeed, weapons of all types, are dangerous in the hands of non-State actors.

The Council's resolution 1540 (2004) banning accessibility of weapons of mass destruction to non-

State actors was a recognition, in part, of this nexus. The international community should complement this with a separate resolution covering small arms and light weapons, which are the weapons killing people worldwide and have become the weapons of choice in almost all conflicts, including those with which the Council is currently seized.

We reaffirm our conviction that the illicit circulation of small arms and light weapons could be controlled, and armed conflicts reduced, if, and only if, the transfer of such weapons was limited to Governments and licensed traders. The international community would thereby ensure the use of such weapons for legitimate purposes only, namely the maintenance of law and order, and national or self-defence.

We reiterate Nigeria's support for the enforcement of Council resolutions on arms embargoes and believe that maximum cooperation on the part of Member States in providing the requisite information on any violation of those embargoes would strengthen the common resolve to address that problem. It is not insignificant in this regard to point out the role of producers in furnishing accurate data on their trade in these weapons with Member States. We should not allow or encourage any situation in which manufacturers could seek to violate existing import regimes. An effective monitoring mechanism to prevent the cross-border movement of arms, combatants and mercenaries would also be invaluable. We recall that the Council addressed this issue in March 2003.

The link between the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons and the illicit exploitation of natural and other resources, such as diamonds and timber, has long been recognized. Successive resolutions of the Council have addressed this issue, but the desired change has been slow in coming. We look forward to action by the Council on the findings and recommendations of the various panels of experts and other bodies established to investigate such links.

Nigeria also wishes to emphasize the importance of ensuring the effective collection of weapons and their storage and destruction in post-conflict situations in the context of disarmament, demobilization and reintegration (DDR) programmes. We believe that the inclusion of DDR programmes in the mandate of the United Nations Operation in Côte d'Ivoire (UNOCI) is timely, and we are confident that such programmes will continue to form part of the future mandates of peacekeeping operations if the international community wishes to avert a relapse into conflict.

The foregoing challenges facing the Council should not overshadow the significant strides that have been made in the area in the past year. The entry into force on 3 July 2005 of the Protocol against the Illicit Manufacturing of and Trafficking in Firearms, Their Parts and Components and Ammunition, which sets out a comprehensive system to control their movement is indeed noteworthy. As a demonstration of Nigeria's strong commitment to the fight against illicit small arms and light weapons, I am pleased to inform the Council that the Government of Nigeria ratified the instrument on 29 December 2005, which was deposited with the Secretary-General on 3 March 2006. Nigeria reaffirms its commitment to fulfil its obligations under the Protocol, as it has always done with regard to all international instruments to which it is a party.

The adoption of the International Instrument to Enable States to Identify and Trace, in a Timely and Reliable Manner, Illicit Small Arms and Light Weapons is indicative of what can be achieved when political will is backed by action. For the Nigerian Government, this can only be a stopgap measure. Only a legally binding international instrument on the transfer of small arms and light weapons could satisfy the yearnings and aspirations of victim States and peoples. Let me also state in this regard that we agree with the Secretary-General that the time is ripe for agreement on brokering in small arms and light weapons, so critical to the success of our efforts in curbing the proliferation of illicit small arms. The General Assembly, by its resolution 60/81 of 8 December 2005 — which established a group of governmental experts to enhance international cooperation on brokering — has shown that there is support for such action. The Security Council should complement this by a clear message of support at the end of this debate.

Nigeria's efforts in these matters are reflected in her firm commitment to regional cooperation, as well as in implementation, jointly with other countries in the West African subregion, of the ECOWAS moratorium. Together with member States of the Community, we are determined to transform the moratorium into a legally binding instrument within the shortest possible time. We trust that the support of the international community for these efforts will

remain strong. Ultimately this would constitute for our countries an endorsement of the path that our leaders have chosen to tread, as well as a contribution to peace and security, stability and development in our region.

Mr. Christmas (Saint Kitts and Nevis): Thank you, Mr. President, for presiding over this session. The issue of the illicit trafficking in small arms is of grave concern and particular importance to my country. In Saint Kitts and Nevis we have been experiencing for some time now a significant increase in crime of all types, in particular crime against persons and property that has paralleled the increase in firearm crimes and offences, as reflected in our national statistics. At the end of the 1980s, such serious crimes as murder and manslaughter averaged about 2 per year, but over the last five years they have averaged over 10 per year — a five-fold increase since 1990. Meanwhile, over the same time period, there was an eighteen-fold increase in firearm crimes and offences.

For us, these are not mere statistics. At this rate of growth, in a few years' time the consequences would be disastrous for our economy, in particular the tourism sector even as we focus on developing that sector to offset the closure of our 350-year-old sugar industry in the face of trade liberalization measures and escalating costs. It would also seriously undermine the long-standing democratic structures of governance in the country, threatening its very stability. I can say that this would also be true for several of the other island States in the Caribbean.

Not only is the illicit trafficking in small arms having a negative effect in my country and other islands of the Caribbean, but the world has watched in horror as it has had and continues to have a devastating effect in many parts of Africa, a continent so rich in natural resources that it should easily be among the most prosperous in the world. Instead, its resources have attracted the wrong type of players, whose greed — aided by the illicit trafficking in arms, among other things — has helped to fuel conflicts and retard development, making that continent probably the poorest.

We have seen also a corresponding link with the illicit trafficking in drugs, as well as illicit trafficking in humans. We believe that these areas should be addressed simultaneously.

If the concept of collective security, as emphatically underscored by world leaders at the September 2005 World Summit, is to have any real meaning, then the international community must act to help the less able countries to combat this scourge. It is a just request. We do not manufacture arms in many of these countries.

Saint Kitts and Nevis aligns itself with the urgent necessity for international cooperation and assistance in supporting the efforts of national Governments to prevent, combat and eradicate the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons in all its aspects.

Mr. Løvald (Norway): Being the last speaker, I shall concentrate on the main points in my statement, the full text of which will be distributed.

Norway is pleased that the Security Council will for the first time pass a resolution on small arms and light weapons. This underlines the serious security dimension of the problem and heralds more decisive and consistent action on the part of the Council. It is a welcome signal in advance of the review conference on the United Nations Programme of Action against the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons.

Norway believes that the Security Council has a key role to play in eliminating the spread of illegal small arms and light weapons. This must be a core element in the Council's peace efforts. Effective arms embargoes now constitute an integral part of the Council's resolutions on most conflict areas, and special monitoring mechanisms are increasingly being put in place to assist the peace missions in this regard. This is a welcome development. We are also pleased to note that an increasing number of arms embargoes explicitly include ammunition. Norway is of the view that ammunition should be subject to the same regulations as the weapons for which they are intended.

The United Nations Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects remains the key global instrument for dealing with this issue. We welcome the significant progress in its implementation over the past year, with the adoption by the General Assembly of an international instrument on tracing and marking small arms and light weapons. We also welcome the General Assembly's request that the Secretary-General establish a group of governmental experts to consider further steps to enhance international cooperation to combat illicit brokering in small arms and light weapons. Norway is convinced that in order to deal effectively with the

destabilizing effect of illicit small arms and light weapons, we must curb illicit brokering. We hope that the expert group will recommend the negotiation of an international instrument against illicit brokering.

Norway is also in favour of the negotiation under United Nations auspices of an arms trade treaty that would regulate all transfers of conventional weapons. We believe that such a treaty would greatly enhance control over the export and transit of small arms and light weapons.

We still have a way to go in developing effective international cooperation to deal with these challenges. Norway believes that it is necessary to focus more closely on the factors that create demand for illicit small arms and on ways to minimize the detrimental effects of illicit small arms on development efforts.

Together with Norwegian non-governmental organizations, we have arranged an experts' seminar on small arms and development in Oslo on 22 and 23 March. The seminar will bring together more than 50 experts from around the world and will, we hope, provide useful input on how to integrate development into the United Nations Programme of Action process.

Disarmament, demobilization and reintegration (DDR) efforts are relevant to the fight against illicit small arms. DDR is also a vital element in any peace operation. We welcome the more consistent inclusion of clear provisions regarding DDR in the mandates of peacekeeping operations. Nevertheless, the role of peacekeeping missions in DDR should be more clearly defined in the mandates for such missions. We endorse the Secretary-General's recommendation to that effect.

Finally, Norway concurs with the Secretary-General that closer interaction between the Security Council and the General Assembly would contribute to a coherent and comprehensive United Nations policy on small arms and light weapons. We also share his view regarding the particular importance of that interaction in the light of the forthcoming review conference on the Programme of Action. We believe it would be useful to look more closely at the issues raised in the Secretary-General's report in connection with the review conference. The Council could also consider whether any of those issues would benefit from a more focused debate in the Council at a later stage.

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): I shall now give the floor to Mrs. Hannelore Hoppe, Officer-in-Charge of the Department for Disarmament Affairs, to respond to comments and questions raised and to make whatever remarks she deems relevant.

Mrs. Hoppe: Today's Security Council debate demonstrates the Council's continued determination, and that of those who took the floor during the open debate, to address the problem of illicit small arms and light weapons, as those weapons play a central role in fuelling conflict and spreading instability.

I would like to thank everyone who welcomed the report of the Secretary-General on initiatives taken to implement the 12 recommendations contained in his earlier report (S/2002/1053).

With the review conference on the Programme of Action on Small Arms and Light Weapons taking place in a few months, this debate was very timely. All the statements delivered underlined the support of Member States for, and the importance of, full implementation of the Programme of Action on the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons.

In that connection, the Secretariat is encouraged by the Council's commitment to strengthen interaction between the Council and the General Assembly in order to contribute to developing a coherent and comprehensive United Nations policy on small arms and light weapons.

The Secretariat also welcomes the Council's recognition of the importance of addressing the issues of ammunition and end-user certificates, as well as the link between illicit weapons and the illegal exploitation of natural resources.

I would like to note the Council's resolve to strengthen the monitoring mechanism for arms embargoes as a means of contributing to curbing the proliferation of small arms and light weapons. I have taken note of the various specific proposals made in that regard.

I would also like to underscore that the steps being taken to enhance international cooperation to prevent, combat and eradicate illicit brokering in small arms and light weapons should be complemented by measures to control brokering at the national level, including by adopting adequate national legislation on brokering.

The Secretariat looks forward to the outcome of this debate, and in particular to your efforts, Mr. President.

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): I thank Mrs. Hoppe for the clarifications she has provided.

There are no further speakers inscribed on my list. The Security Council has thus concluded the present stage of its consideration of the item on its agenda.

The meeting rose at 4.15 p.m.